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DEPT FOR SCA - PDAS MOON AND DAS KROL

E.O. 12958: DECL: 06/22/2019

TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [MARR](#) [MOPS](#) [KG](#)

SUBJECT: MANAS UPDATE: FRENCH ENVOY SEEKS WAYS TO ASSIST

REF: A. BISHKEK 650

[1](#)B. BISHKEK 638

Classified By: Charge d'Affaires Lee Litzenberger, Reasons 1.4 (b) and (d).

[1](#)1. (S) Summary: Pierre Lellouche, France's Special Representative for Afghanistan and Pakistan, paid a weekend visit to Kyrgyzstan. On June 20, Lellouche met with Charge and then held a dinner with several diplomats. On June 21, Lellouche toured Manas Air Base prior to meeting with President Bakiyev. Following the Bakiyev meeting, Lellouche telephone Charge to describe the outlines of a "deal" which he said would keep access to Manas. Charge thanked Lellouche for the information, but, consistent with our instructions, did not reveal to him that the U.S. and Kyrgyzstan had already agreed on terms for continued access to Manas. End Summary.

[1](#)2. (S) Pierre Lellouche, France's Special Representative for Afghanistan and Pakistan, visited Kyrgyzstan June 20-21. On June 20, Lellouche told the Charge that he believed healing Kyrgyzstan's "wounded pride," inviting Bakiyev for a White House visit, paying increased compensation, and emphasizing the temporary nature of the Manas Air Base mission to Moscow were key components in getting Kyrgyz agreement to retain Manas Air Base. The Charge addressed Lellouche's suggestions without broaching news of the agreements reached with Kyrgyz authorities, and noted the positive impact the letters from Presidents Obama and Karzai had had on Bakiyev. Lellouche immediately proposed arranging a similar letter from President Sarkozy. Lellouche added that he would be seeing Special Representative Richard Holbrooke at the June 26-27 G-8 gathering in Trieste, and said he would raise both his formula for Manas and the idea of a Sarkozy letter with Holbrooke. He emphasized that he wanted to identify ways to bolster international support for operations in Afghanistan.

[1](#)3. (C) Following the meeting with Charge, Lellouche hosted a dinner with several diplomats. During the dinner, Lellouche expressed interest in Asylbek Aidaraliyev's proposal to redirect Kyrgyz bilateral debt interest payments to the purchase of Kyrgyz goods for export to Afghanistan as humanitarian assistance (Ref B). Turkish Ambassador Serpil Alpman suggested to Lellouche that Kyrgyz women's groups be recruited to support a greater role for women in Afghan society. Lellouche also appeared interested in supporting an increase in the number of Afghan students at the American University of Central Asia here in Bishkek.

[1](#)4. (S) On June 21, Lellouche toured Manas Air Base, meeting with new 376th AEW Commander Col. Holt. That afternoon, Lellouche met with Kyrgyz President Kurmanbek Bakiyev to discuss bilateral issues and Kyrgyzstan's role in supporting security and stability in Afghanistan. Following the Bakiyev meeting, Lellouche telephoned both Col. Holt and Charge to say that Bakiyev was open to the idea of allowing continued

access to Manas, and he described the outlines of a "deal" to do so. Lellouche said that Bakiyev wanted a letter from French President Sarkozy, and that the U.S. simply needed to "show more respect" for Bakiyev, increase compensation to \$150 - 200 million per year, and find some resolution to the 2006 shooting incident. Charge thanked Lellouche for the information, but did not reveal the status of ongoing U.S.-Kyrgyz discussions on Manas.

15. (S) Comment: The French, who also operate out of Manas, have a strong interest in our reaching agreement to continue access to Manas. We take it as a positive sign that the "deal" Lellouche described after his meeting with Bakiyev coincides roughly with the agreements already reached, and it may be that the message Bakiyev conveyed to Lellouche constitutes Bakiyev's "understanding" of the U.S. proposal. The financial package, when funding for the ramp construction, air navigation systems, enhanced counter-terrorism and narcotics funding, and the proposed joint development fund, exceeds \$150 million. The recently cleared press guidance on the shooting investigation that we have shared with FM Sarbayev may well offer resolution to the case inasmuch as it demonstrates that legal channels are still being pursued.

16. (S) Comment continued: Late on June 21, the Charge phoned Foreign Minister Sarbayev, who told the Charge that "everything was still in order" following the Lellouche visit. Sarbayev planned to present the agreements to the Cabinet of Minister on June 22, and, following Cabinet approval, to Parliament later the same day.

LITZENBERGER